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CAVALIER JOHNSON
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

Leading Men Fellows program offers promising impact for young Milwaukee children

Statement of Alderman Cavalier Johnson December 13, 2018

Yesterday, I traveled to the new Helen Bader Foundation headquarters in Harambee for the announcement of the Leading Men Fellows program being introduced to Milwaukee. When I walked into the room, I was immediately greeted by young men of color who stood tall, were confident in themselves, and who were all proud of the work they are doing. This inaugural group of Fellows is already in place at Milwaukee Public Schools and Next Door Foundation classrooms across our city.

These young men have the chance to play a critical role in the education of young kids in Milwaukee by providing a positive example of young men who look like the kids that they interact with on a daily basis. Studies show that youth in difficult circumstances (the situation for far too many kids in Milwaukee) can positively benefit from interactions with educators who they can identify with.

Whether kids want to “get a haircut like Mr. Franco” (one of the Fellows) -- or they open up about the struggles that they face at home and in their neighborhoods, or talk about their challenges and are empowered by the Fellows in their classrooms -- this program shows the positive impact that the Leading Men Fellows program is having in Milwaukee today and can continue to have on kids in our community for years to come.

The implementation of the Leading Men Fellows program was one of the recommendations of the Early Education Task Force (EETF) that I co-chaired along with Danae Davis of Milwaukee Succeeds. I want to thank her, Gerard Randall of the Milwaukee Education Partnership, Tracey Sparrow of Next Door Foundation, and all of the contributors to the EETF.

I invite the community to learn about the program and the promise that it can have for years to come.

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